

Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled).
2. (Currently amended) A separator as set forth in claim 27 [[1]] wherein said inlet opening has a funnel-shaped configuration adapted to admit and align any misaligned ~~for receiving~~ workpieces moving into said passage.
3. (Original) A separator as set forth in claim 2 wherein a portion of said inlet end portion of said upper guide plate is flared upward to form said funnel-shaped configuration.
4. (Original) A separator as set forth in claim 3 wherein said upper guide plate has a V-shaped wall, an end portion of which is bent upward into tabs to form said funnel-shaped configuration.
5. (Currently amended) A separator as set forth in claim 27 [[1]] wherein said passage has an intermediate portion disposed between said inlet opening and said outlet opening, said inlet opening being substantially larger in cross-sectional area than said intermediate portion of said passage.
6. (Currently amended) A separator as set forth in claim 27 [[1]] wherein said lower guide plate has an intermediate portion that extends between said inlet end portion and said outlet end portion of said lower guide plate, said inlet end portion of said lower guide plate extending parallel to said intermediate portion of said lower guide plate;

said upper guide plate having an intermediate portion that extends between said inlet end portion and said outlet end portion of said upper guide plate, said inlet end portion of said upper guide plate extending transverse to said intermediate portion of said upper guide plate.

7. (Currently amended) A separator as set forth in claim 27 ~~[[1]]~~ wherein one of said upper and lower guide plates has a view port for enabling viewing of said passage from a location other than said inlet opening and said outlet opening.

8-26. (Canceled).

27. (Currently amended) A magnetic separator for spacing a plurality of ~~substantially plate-like~~ workpieces in face-to-face relationship, said separator comprising:

an upper guide plate and a lower guide plate that define a passage for workpieces moving through said separator; ~~and~~

an upper pole piece adjacent said upper guide plate and a lower pole piece adjacent said lower guide plate, said upper and lower pole pieces providing a magnetic field operative to orient workpieces in said passage; and

an adjustment mechanism for adjusting the vertical position of said upper guide plate relative to said lower guide plate;

said adjustment mechanism comprising a member that is rotatable about an axis, said rotatable member having a first portion fixed for vertical movement with said upper guide plate and a second portion that is threadedly received in a frame portion of said separator, rotation of said rotatable member about said axis causing axial movement of said rotatable member and thereby of said upper guide plate relative to said frame portion, ~~wherein said passage has an inlet opening with a funnel-shaped configuration that is adapted to admit and align any misaligned workpieces moving into said inlet opening of said passage.~~

28-35. (Canceled).

36. (Currently amended) A magnetic separator for spacing a plurality of ~~substantially plate-like~~ workpieces in face-to-face relationship, said separator comprising:

an upper guide plate and a lower guide plate that at least partially define a passage for workpieces moving through said separator;

an upper pole piece ~~supporting an upper magnet~~ adjacent said upper guide plate and a lower pole piece ~~supporting a lower magnet~~ adjacent said lower guide plate, said upper and lower pole pieces ~~magnets~~ providing a magnetic field operative to orient workpieces in said passage; and

an adjustment mechanism that modifies the strength of the magnetic field on the workpieces by ~~for~~ adjusting the vertical position of said upper pole piece relative to said upper guide plate, comprising a member that is rotatable about an axis causing axial movement of said upper pole piece, ~~wherein said passage has an inlet opening with a funnel shaped configuration that is adapted to admit and align any misaligned workpieces moving into said inlet opening of said passage.~~

37-43. (Canceled).

44. (Currently amended) A magnetic separator for spacing a plurality of ~~substantially plate-like~~ workpieces in face-to-face relationship, said separator comprising:

an upper guide plate and a lower guide plate that at least partially define a passage for workpieces moving through said separator between an inlet end of said separator and an outlet end of said separator;

an upper pole piece adjacent said upper guide plate and a lower pole piece adjacent said lower guide plate, said upper and lower pole pieces providing a magnetic field operative to orient workpieces in said passage;

a frame on which said upper guide plate is supported in a position extending longitudinally between said inlet end of said separator and said outlet end of said separator; and

a mechanism releasably supporting said upper guide plate on said frame whereby said upper guide plate is slidable longitudinally along said frame to enable removal of said upper

guide plate from said separator, ~~wherein said passage has an inlet opening with a funnel-shaped configuration that is adapted to admit and align any misaligned workpieces moving into said inlet opening of said passage.~~

45. (Canceled).

46. (New) The magnetic separator of claim 27 wherein said rotatable member first end is rotatably captured by said upper guide plate.

47. (New) The magnetic separator of claim 36 wherein said passage has an inlet opening with a funnel-shaped configuration that is adapted to admit and align any misaligned workpieces moving into said inlet opening of said passage.

48. (New) The magnetic separator of claim 36 wherein said an upper pole piece supports an upper magnet adjacent said upper guide plate and said lower pole piece supports a lower magnet adjacent said lower guide plate.

49. (New) The magnetic separator of claim 36 wherein said separator is adapted to separate a plurality of substantially plate-like metal workpieces.

50. (New) The magnetic separator of claim 36 further comprising an adjustment mechanism for adjusting the vertical position of said lower pole piece relative to lower upper guide plate.

51. (New) The magnetic separator of claim 36 further comprising a frame on which said upper guide plate is supported, wherein said adjustment mechanism adjusts the vertical position of said upper pole piece relative to said frame.

52. (New) The magnetic separator of claim 44 wherein said passage has an inlet opening with a funnel-shaped configuration that is adapted to admit and align any misaligned workpieces moving into said inlet opening of said passage.

53. (New) The magnetic separator of claim 44 wherein said upper guide plate includes a side wall, and wherein said mechanism releasably supporting said upper guide plate comprises an L-shaped slot.

54. (New) The magnetic separator of claim 52 further comprising a pin attached to said frame, said pin configured to be slideably received in said L-shaped slot.